

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-22, 26, and 27 were allowed and claims 23 and 24 were rejected. The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 1-22, 26, and 27. By the present Response, claims 23 and 24 have been amended. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1-24, 26, and 27 will remain pending in the present patent application. Reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings were objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Specifically, the Examiner stated that:

The drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Therefore, the “means for mounting a plurality of fans *within* the housing (claim 23) must be shown or the feature(s) canceled from the claims(s).

Claim 23 has been amended in light of the Examiner’s comments. By this amendment, it is believed that the objection to the drawings has now been rendered moot. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Examiner stated that:

The claim(s) contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the invention. The newly added limitation “means for

mounting a plurality of fans *within* the housing (claim 23) does not appear in the original disclosure, and therefore it is considered new matter.

Claim 23 has been amended by this response in light of the Examiner's comments. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Waldner, Jr. (hereinafter "Waldner"), U.S. Patent No. 5,927,384, in view of Padgett et al. (hereinafter "Padgett"), U.S. Patent No. 1,968,618. Claims 23 and 24 have been amended by this response.

Independent claim 23, as amended, recites the following:

23. A bearing, comprising:
means for mounting at least one bearing element within a housing;
means for mounting a plurality of fans to the housing;
means for discerning a temperature of the at least one bearing element; and
means for variably controlling the speed of the plurality of fans in correlation with the temperature discerned of the at least one bearing element.

Independent claim 23 is patentable because the cited references, either alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the recited features of the claim. For example, the cited references do not disclose "means for mounting a plurality of fans to the housing" or "means for variably controlling the speed of the plurality of fans in correlation with the temperature discerned of the at least one bearing element."

The Waldner reference discloses a differential 2 having a single motorized fan 24, not a plurality of fans. In addition, the Padgett reference discloses a gear assembly 15 housed within a casing 10, but no fans at all. Therefore, the cited references do not disclose or suggest: “means for mounting a *plurality* of fans to the housing,” as recited in claim 23.

Furthermore, the fan 24 of Waldner is “selectively operated” by either a manual switch or a thermostatically controlled automatic switch to force cooling air 34 through internal air conduits. *See* Waldren, col. 5, lines 14-17. Thus, the speed of the fan 24 is not varied in Waldner, the fan 24 is simply on or off. Since the Padgett reference does not even disclose a fan, the Padgett reference cannot disclose or suggest: “variably controlling the speed” of a fan. Thus, the cited references fail to disclose or suggest: “means for variably controlling the speed of the plurality of fans in correlation with the temperature discerned of the at least one bearing element,” also as recited in claim 23.

For all of these reasons, the cited references fail to disclose or suggest all of the recited features of amended independent claim 23. Accordingly, amended independent claim 23 is patentable over the cited references. Claim 24 depends from claim 23. Therefore, claim 24 also is patentable over the cited references. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of all pending claims are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

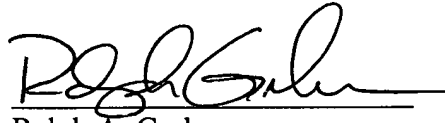
As noted above, the Examiner allowed claims 1-22, 26, and 27. The Applicants would once again like to thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 1-22, 26, and 27.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ralph A. Graham
Reg. No. 47,607
FLETCHER YODER
Houston, TX 77269-2289
(281) 970-4545

CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS
ALLEN-BRADLEY COMPANY, LLC
Patent Department/704P Floor 8 T-29
1201 South Second Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53204
Attention: Mr. Alexander Gerasimow
Phone: (414) 382-2000